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TERRORISM

Fat Man, Tailor, Soldier, Spy

How the U.S. and Italy got the Mafia to help find General Dozier

On the evening of Dec. 17, 1981, Red Brigades terrorists kidnapped Brigadier General James Dozier, 50, the highest-ranking U.S. officer in NATO's southern Europe command, from his home in Verona. The abduction triggered the largest man hunt in Italy's history. Forty-two days later, Italian commandos stormed an apartment in Padua and freed the American general. It was a stunning piece of police work that won praise from around the world; it also marked the beginning of the end for the notorious terrorist group. But the full story of how the authorities found Dozier has never been revealed. American and Italian intelligence agencies, *TIME* has learned, turned to the Mafia for help in locating the general.

What occurred was a remarkable tale of triumphs and bumbles, of Brooklyn *consiglieri* and Milan *Mafiosi*, of chases along New York City's Fifth Avenue and gun-toting criminals tailing intelligence agents along Italian *autostrade*. So secret was the operation that not even U.S. Ambassador to Italy Maxwell Rabb was aware of it until *TIME* Correspondent Jonathan Beaty, accompanied by Rome Correspondent Barry Kalb, questioned the diplomat two weeks ago. Beaty's report:

It took only two days for top officials at SISMI, the Italian intelligence agency, to decide that it might be useful to turn to the Mafia for help in finding General Dozier. Although the Mafia had long detested the Red Brigades, SISMI knew that there would be a public outcry if it was ever discovered that an Italian government agency had contacted the Mafia directly. Consequently, a more subtle plan was devised. An approach would be made to *Mafiosi* in the U.S., who would be asked to get in touch with their counterparts in Italy. Marcello Campione, then military attaché to the Italian mission at the United Nations, began making inquiries in New York Mafia circles. Working under a code name, "the Tailor," Campione was led to an influential Mafia *consigliere* in Brooklyn who makes his living by helping Italians move to the U.S. "The Fat Man," as the arranger is known in the underworld, agreed to put Campione in touch with a fugitive *Mafioso* from Italy who was hiding out in New York.

That contact turned out to be Dominic Lombino, 40, a lawyer from Milan whose clients had included Franchino Restelli, the northern Italian city's leading *Mafioso*. Jailed briefly in 1978 for his

U.S. in July 1981 when Italian authorities suddenly seized his passport, a signal that they were preparing to indict him. The Italian military attaché told Lombino that he could make a lot of money if he would help with the Dozier case. On Dec. 22, only five days after Dozier had been abducted, Lombino phoned the Fat Man



The jubilant and still unshaven victim after his rescue
Triumphs and bumbles from Brooklyn to Milan.

and then Armando Sportelli, chief of SISMI's foreign operations in Rome. The word: Dozier was being held somewhere inside the triangle formed by the cities of Verona, Padua and Bologna. The next day, after more phone conversations with associates in Italy, Lombino was able to tell SISMI that the American general was definitely in Padua. Lombino did not know the precise location, but suggested that his old client Restelli, then imprisoned in Milan's notorious San Vittore prison for Mafia activities, might be able to come up with the address.

Attaché Campione quickly agreed. Over the Christmas holiday he developed a plan to sneak Lombino out of the U.S. and into Italy so that Lombino could talk with Restelli. Since Lombino was still a

cial had to concoct a new identity for him. With the Fat Man's aid, Lombino acquired the Social Security number of an unwitting high school driver's education instructor from Brooklyn, while a cooperative priest in Manhattan provided him with false baptism records.

On Dec. 27, dressed in dark glasses, Levi's and running shoes, Lombino headed for the U.S. passport office on Manhattan's Fifth Avenue. Though he had been assured that there would be no problems, Lombino, now joined by Campione, nervously showed up an hour early to check out the area. They quickly spotted too many men wearing trench coats and reading newspapers. Sensing a trap, Lombino ran down the up escalators to the street and jumped into a cab before he could be captured. The startled Campione simply disappeared into the crowd.

The pursuers turned out to be FBI agents who had learned that an Italian Mafia associate living illegally in New York was trying to obtain a false passport to return to Italy. Within hours, FBI agents were grilling both the Fat Man and Campione, demanding to know why the Italians were helping a fugitive *Mafioso* like Lombino. A panicky Campione called Sportelli in Rome to find out if he should tell the FBI the truth. The SISMI foreign-intelligence boss immediately called "M," the CIA agent in Rome who was serving as the agency's liaison in the Dozier case and explained the entire ploy.

The CIA was intrigued. It quickly called the FBI off the case and began negotiating directly with Lombino by phone. Lombino, however, no longer trusted SISMI. He insisted on U.S. protection as well as a pledge that he could legally return to the U.S. if he went to Italy and saw Restelli. The Justice Department approved the residency deal, and as a result, in early January 1982 Lombino made the first of two trips to the Washington, D.C., area to meet with CIA agents.

For unknown reasons, Lombino's trip to Italy was delayed. According to Italian intelligence sources, the problem was a rivalry between Campione and General Ninetto Lugaresi, the head of SISMI. Finally, on Jan. 23, Lombino boarded an Alitalia flight from New York's Kennedy Airport to Rome. Accompanied by Campione and wearing a wig as a disguise, he carried CIA-supplied papers in the name of Andrew Dimanso, the alias he was supposed to use in Italy. When the pair landed in Rome, they were met by the CIA's "M" and a cadre of American and Italian intelligence agents. Lombino was hustled away to a hotel a block from the U.S. embassy. Twice during the next day, he met with Franca Musi, a Red Brigades courier who had been captured two weeks earlier